MARVEL

6

LGY#218

EWING
HORAK
ABURTOV

BLACK PANTHER

MARVEL STUDIOS
THE MARVELS
IN THEATERS NOVEMBER 10

WE ARE TRYING, SIR. BUT THIS QUOTA IS *IMPOSSIBLE.*

IMPOSSIBLE?

THEN LEAVE.

SMACK

I'LL FIND THE NEXT *NIGANDAN WENCH* WHO CAN MEET THE MARK WITHOUT COMPLAINT.

THE REST OF YOU, *BACK TO WORK!*

YOU WOULD THINK THEY WOULD SHOW SOME DAMN *GRATITUDE* THAT I DON'T IMMEDIATELY SEND THEM TO THE *AUTHORITIES.*

ZINAI, I NEED YOU TO HEAD BACK TO THE BORDER TONIGHT AND BRING ME--

GRRRK!

YOU FIND SUCH *DELIGHT* IN PREYING ON THE VULNERABLE.

ARGH!

SHALL I *RETURN* THE *FAVOR?*

WAKANDA.
JUST OUTSIDE BIRNIN ZANA.
ABOUT A CENTURY AGO.

KING M'TELI.
THE BLACK PANTHER.

I WON'T *EXERT* MYSELF. I HAVE OTHER FRIENDS WHO WILL BE *THRILLED* TO MEET YOU.

CAPTAIN N'DOZI...

...YOU MAY PROCEED.

MOVING IN, YOUR *HIGHNESS*. YOU MAY *ALSO* WISH TO INVESTIGATE THE INDUSTRIAL *EMISSIONS* ENTERING THE RIVER HERE.

HANDS ON YOUR *HEAD*! EVERY LAST *ONE* OF YOU!

NOW!

CAPTAIN! LOWER YOUR WEAPON *IMMEDIATELY*.

IT'S REALLY HIM! THE BLACK PANTHER!

THE *FOREMAN* IS BOUND UPSTAIRS. YOUR ORDERS WERE TO ARREST ANY REMAINING OVERSEERS AND TO SEARCH FOR EVIDENCE.

CERTAINLY, YOUR HIGHNESS. BUT HAVE THESE *INVADERS* NOT ALSO COMMITTED *CRIMES* AGAINST THE NATION?

THEY *DISRESPECT* OUR *BORDER*. THEY DESPOIL OUR *WATERS*.

MY OWN ANCESTRAL VILLAGE IS DOWNRIVER FROM HERE-- *WAKANDAN BABIES* DRINK OF THIS *POISON!*

THE RULE OF *LAW*--

CAPTAIN. MUST I REMIND YOU?

I AM THE RULE OF LAW.

OF COURSE, YOUR HIGHNESS.

MEN, YOU HEARD THE BLACK PANTHER! SEARCH FOR ALL *EVIDENCE*. INTERVIEW THESE...*WITNESSES*.

LEAVE NO STONE *UNTURNED*.

WAKANDA RECENTLY TRANSITIONED FROM A MONARCHY TO A PARLIAMENTARY DEMOCRACY. IN THE UNREST THAT FOLLOWED, THE PRIME MINISTER EXILED T'CHALLA TO BRING PEACE TO WAKANDA. BUT EVEN IF HE IS NO LONGER KING, T'CHALLA WILL ALWAYS BE THE BLACK PANTHER. AND THE BLACK PANTHER WILL ALWAYS SERVE WAKANDA.

BIRNIN T'CHAKA IS EMBROILED IN A GANG WAR AS THE FIVE FAMILIES WHO RULE IT STRUGGLE FOR POWER. AT THE HEART OF IT IS BABA NKISU, THE PATRIARCH OF THE NKISU CRIME FAMILY—RUMOR HAS IT HIS ENEMIES HAVE BEEN MYSTERIOUSLY DISAPPEARING, AND T'CHALLA IS DETERMINED TO UNCOVER HOW AND WHY. BUT AFTER THE ILONGA CRIME FAMILY INTERRUPTED A WEDDING BETWEEN THE NKISUS AND THE ALIYOS, BABA NKISU IS OUT FOR BLOOD, SUMMONING SUPERNATURAL FORCES HE DOES NOT UNDERSTAND—A POWERFUL ENTITY CALLED KIVU'MA!

BLACK PANTHER

REIGN AT DUSK PART 6

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BLACK PANTHER CREATED BY STAN LEE & JACK KIRBY

TAKING A REPRIEVE, CAPTAIN N'DOZI?

FAR FROM IT, MY LIEGE.

I FIND THAT TAKING TIME TO ASSESS THE ***SPIRITUAL*** DAMAGE DONE BY WAKANDA'S ENEMIES IS ***CRUCIAL*** IN MAINTAINING MY FORTITUDE.

N'DOZI. YOU KNOW THAT YOU ARE AS ***KIN*** TO ME. SINCE BIRTH. AND I AM GRATEFUL FOR YOUR SKILL AS AN INVESTIGATOR, UNCOVERING ILLS LIKE ***THIS*** ONE.

I KNOW, M'TELI.

IT WOULD NEVER BE MY AMBITION TO ***UNDERMINE*** YOUR ***AUTHORITY*** AS LEADER OF THE ***HATUT ZERAZE.***

BUT AT TIMES I WORRY YOU FORGET WHO OUR ***REAL*** ENEMIES ARE.

OUR FOES ARE ALL AROUND US, MY KING, AND THEY DWELL IN EQUAL COMFORT WITHIN OUR ***HEARTS.***

WE STRAY DAILY FROM THE LAND AND SPIRITS AND MORAL FOUNDATIONS THAT GUIDED OUR ANCESTORS. OUR ***GENEROSITY*** MAKES US ***WEAK.*** OUR ***PROSPERITY*** MAKES US ***UNPRINCIPLED.***

IF THE KING DOES NOT AWARD THE CAPTAIN WITH THE ***CIRCLET OF BAST*** NEXT WEEK, I WOULD EAT MY ***HOLSTER.*** THEY ARE AS ***BROTHERS.***

AH, BUT THE CAPTAIN HAS ***EARNED*** IT, NO? HE IS THE MOST RENOWNED AND MOST DISCIPLINED LEADER OF OUR ORDER IN RECENT ***MEMORY.*** BE FAIR.

SO IT IS. SO IT IS.

OUR LAND AND ANCESTORS AND MORALS ARE ESSENTIAL, N'DOZI. AND THEY ARE ALSO MALLEABLE AND ***PLENTIFUL.***

WHO DESERVES OUR PROTECTION, M'TELI? THOSE FOREIGNERS, OR OUR OWN ***WATERS*** FROM WHICH ALL LIFE IS SUSTAINED?

YOU ARE TOO WISE FOR THESE FALSE BINARIES, OLD FRIEND.

NO, I AM BUT A SIMPLE MAN, MY KING. AND REGRETTABLY ***OLD-FASHIONED.***

LATER...

"IT WAS ALARMING, MY LOVE.

"I HAVE NEVER SHIED AWAY FROM VIOLENCE. BUT N'DOZI *RELISHES* IT...

"...IN THE NAME OF *CERTAIN RIGHTEOUSNESS.*"

BIRNIN ZANA.
ROYAL CHAMBERS.

HE'S A *ZEALOT*, M'TELI. PURE AND SIMPLE. HIS WAKANDA IS AN IMPOSSIBLE ONE, A PLACE OF MYTH FROM A TIME THAT NEVER WAS. YOU *CHOOSE* NOT TO SEE IT.

JUST AS YOU CHOOSE NOT TO SEE THAT YOUR DEFEAT HERE IS *CERTAIN*.

YOU SEE THIS, BABY T'CHANDA? YOUR MOTHER IS THE CONSUMMATE *MILITARY STRATEGIST*.

QUEEN IMANDLA? KING M'TELI? PLEASE FORGIVE MY INTERRUPTION.

MAY I SPEAK FREELY, HIGHNESSES? THE MATTER IS OF AN UPSETTING NATURE.

GO AHEAD.

THE *FOREMAN* OF THE *MANUFACTURING FACILITY* THAT YOU SHUT DOWN YESTERDAY WAS TO STAND *TRIAL* THIS MORNING.

HE WAS FOUND IN HIS CELL. DEAD.

DID HE--?

IT APPEARS HE WAS POISONED. EXTREMELY HIGH DOSES OF HEAVY METALS. MERCURY, CADMIUM, LEAD, *ARSENIC*.

THE FORENSIC PATHOLOGIST FIRST ASSUMED IT WAS A *LETHAL INJECTION*, BUT FURTHER EXAMINATION REVEALS--

HE *DRANK* THE POISON. WATER LACED WITH THOSE CONTAMINANTS IN TREMENDOUS AMOUNTS, I SUPPOSE.

PRECISELY.

THANK YOU, LIEUTENANT. YOU MAY GO.

SOON AFTER...

IT IS MY GREAT PLEASURE TO BESTOW UPON YOU THE *CIRCLET OF BAST*. WAKANDA'S HIGHEST HONOR, IT IS A RECOGNITION OF THOSE WHO HAVE SHOWN GREAT *COURAGE* IN DEFENDING THE NATION. AND NO ONE HAS SHOWN MORE COURAGE THAN YOU--

--OUR *MINISTER OF PUBLIC HEALTH*, DOCTOR A'ALIA KINGAWE!

ARE YOU ALL RIGHT, CAPTAIN N'DOZI? YOU--

HUSH.

THE *KING* IS SPEAKING.

N'DOZI, MY FRIEND...

...I LET YOU ATTEND THE CEREMONY TODAY OUT OF ***RESPECT.*** IT IS FOR THE SAME REASON THAT ***I*** AM HERE TONIGHT, NOT THE DORA MILAJE OR ***YOUR OWN MEN.***

BUT YOU MUST PAY FOR YOUR ***CRIME,*** N'DOZI. LET US MAKE THIS ***SIMPLE.*** COME WITH-- *EH?*

-SIGH- WITH ALL YOU HAVE DONE, N'DOZI...

"--I NEVER TOOK YOU FOR A *COWARD.*"

I WAS *THANKFUL* TO THE *GODS.*

I HAD ENACTED MY *GREATEST* DECISION, MADE A *BOLD* CHOICE IN DEFENSE OF THE PURITY OF OUR NATION.

AND THE KING THOUGHT ME A *CRIMINAL.*

IT WAS *PAST TIME* THAT I LEFT HIS EMPLOY, LEST THE ERROR OF HIS WAYS *CONTAMINATE* ME.

I HAD MASTERED *MARTIAL STRATEGY.* READ AND STUDIED TALES OF OUR GREATEST *WARRIORS* AND *PHILOSOPHERS.*

TO BE THE SWIFT ARM OF *JUSTICE* THAT WAKANDA REQUIRED, TO RETURN OUR COUNTRY TO ITS GREATEST FOUNDATIONS, I NEEDED... *OTHER* ABILITIES.

I HAD HEARD RUMORS OF A SHAMAN WHO WAS BEREFT OF STUDENTS. WHISPERS THAT THE VILLAGE NOW *FEARED* AND *LOATHED* HIS WISDOM.

TEACH ME.

MY MASTER TAUGHT ME TO ACCESS A PLACE IN THE *DJALIA*--THE SPIRIT REALM THAT HOUSES COLLECTIVE WAKANDAN MEMORY AND THE SOULS OF OUR ANCESTORS--FROM WHICH MANY HAD TURNED THEIR FACES.

THEY FEARED IT *DARK* AND *WICKED*.

BUT IS THE WORLD NOT ALSO *DARK* AND *WICKED*?

WHEN WE CAST OUR EYES AWAY FROM THOSE THINGS THAT MAKE OUR HEARTS ACHE--SORROW, CRUELTY, ENVY, GRIEF--DO WE NOT LOSE SOMETHING THAT MAKES US ALSO *HUMAN*?

THERE IS *UNDENIABLE POWER* IN THE *WILDERNESS* OF OUR *EVILS*.

I BECAME A PHANTOM.

A *WOLF* THAT STALKS IN THE NIGHT.

LET US FINISH HERE AND BE DONE FOR THE DAY!

WHAT'S THAT?

PREYING ON THE *SOULS* OF THOSE WHO BROUGHT *SHAME*, PESTILENCE AND *FILTH* TO WAKANDA.

I EARNED A NEW NAME, WHISPERED IN THE NIGHTMARES OF MY ENEMIES. "*KIVU'MA*." THE GREY WOLF.

AZANIAN WARES! *FABRIC*, PERFUME, FINE THINGS STRAIGHT FROM AZANIA!

HRRRK!

-COUGH-
-COUGH-

RUN. GO.

I AM MERELY DOING WHAT YOU ARE TOO *WEAK-WILLED* TO DO, MY KING.

EXTERMINATING THE *PLUNDERERS* OF WAKANDA.

TERRORIZING THE DEFENSELESS.

NNNGGGH.

DEFENSELESS?! WHO DESERVES YOUR PROTECTION, BLACK PANTHER?

N'DOZI?!

IS DEAD. WHAT REMAINS IS A SIGIL OF THE RIGHTEOUS.

YOU ASSUMED I RAN AWAY FROM MY PAST ACTIONS. I WAS RUNNING TOWARD THE FUTURE OF A NATION GROUNDED IN THE PURITY OF OUR HISTORY.

AIYAAA!!!!!! NO!

FWOOOSH

I HAVE STUDIED YOU, *KIVU'MA.*

AND I, TOO, BEAR THE WISDOM OF MY *ELDERS* AND A REVERENCE FOR THE *OLD WAYS.*

GOLDEN MOONLIT VERVAIN. BINDS *CRUEL SPIRITS.*

NO LONGER WILL YOU MOVE BETWEEN *WORLDS.* IN THE NAME OF BAST AND HER ACOLYTES, I BIND YOU TO THE *DJALIA.*

AS YOU HAVE CHOSEN A SPIRIT'S *FATE,* SO SHALL YOU DWELL IN THE *REALM* OF THE *SPIRITS,* WHERE THOSE WITH GREATER POWER AND BENEVOLENCE WILL *WATCH* YOU.

GOODBYE, N'DOZI.

AND SO I LAY IN WAIT, ABIDING IN *FAITH* THAT ONE DAY I COULD *LEAVE* THE REALM OF ANCESTRAL SPIRITS AND ONCE AGAIN SEE THE LAND THAT I LOVED SO *FIERCELY*.

THAT I COULD RENEW MY FIGHT FOR ITS GLORY. THAT I COULD EXPEL THE INTERLOPERS WHO WOULD BRING THEIR BLIGHT TO WAKANDA.

AND THEN, ONE DAY...

...THE DJALIA, THE PLANE OF THE SPIRITS, WAS *LOST*.*

*SEE COATES' **BLACK PANTHER #22**. --E.E.

SUDDENLY, I COULD RETURN TO THE EARTHLY REALM *AT WILL*, MOVING BETWEEN THE LAND OF THE LIVING AND SOME UNNAMED VOID *BEYOND* THE DJALIA.

I FOUND A NATION *IN PAIN*. AND A CITY BESET BY *TOXINS* OF THE *SPIRIT* AND WRACKED WITH *HUNGER*.

BIRNIN T'CHAKA. NKISU COMPOUND. PRESENT DAY.

I AM NOT AS *STRONG* AS I ONCE WAS. NO MATTER. I FOUND A *VESSEL*, ONE WHOM I COULD *PLY* WITH HIS OWN FOOLISH AVARICE.

I USED HIS PETTY *GRIEVANCES* AS STONES IN THE WALL OF MY OWN GROWING FORTRESS.

I LEARNED THAT THE *PANTHER* IS *GONE*.

ANOTHER MAGNATE GONE MISSING

THIS ONE HAS *OUTLIVED* HIS *USEFULNESS*. NO MATTER.

THE PATH IS *CLEAR* TO ME NOW. THE ROAD TO THE *WAKANDA* THAT IS OUR *DESTINY*-- STRONG AND *PURE*.

MOMENTS LATER...

NONE OF *BABA NKISU'S GUARDS* ARE AT THEIR POSTS. SURELY THEY ARE NOT HIDING FROM THE RAIN...

NOW WHAT IS THIS?

KIVU'MA KIVU'MA KIVU'MA KIVU'MA KIVU'MA--

HERE IN BIRNIN T'CHAKA, THE CITY OF MY FATHER...

...WHAT A PITY THAT I SEEM TO BE THE *LATE* ARRIVAL AT *EVERY GATHERING.*

NEXT: RIGHTEOUSNESS.

MAP OF WAKANDA

BY **ADAM SIMPSON**, AS PRESENTED IN **DK's MARVEL UNIVERSE: MAP BY MAP** (2021).

BIRNIN T'CHAKA AS IMAGINED BY EVE L. EWING AND CHRIS ALLEN:

Far from the Golden City, distant from the seat of power, at the foot of the mountainous Jabari-Lands, is the city of Birnin T'Chaka. No one is poor in Wakanda. This is a country that provides for the basic needs of all its people. Everyone has housing and food--the essentials. But in Birnin T'Chaka, some people have only those essentials. Nothing of flash, nothing too special or fancy. Some of this is by necessity--folks just getting by--and some of it is cultural. We're in the rust belt of Wakanda, a city built meters deep into the infrastructure of its now-abandoned mines. People in Biti (Biti is what locals call Birnin T'Chaka, as in "B.T.") pride themselves on choosing substance over style. Of course, as with all things, this morphs into being its own kind of style.

BITI BANTER

Now that we've dug deep into some of Wakanda's murkier history...what is Kivu'Ma's next move? And will T'Challa be able to rescue Baba Nkisu before he is consumed by a vengeful spirit? You'll have to keep reading to find out—but in the meantime, here is Eve L. Ewing, back to answer more of your letters!

Very cool second issue. I'm loving the slow narrative pace, allowing for lots of character development and deeper drives into what the characters are all feeling about this new and unstable status quo in Wakanda.

The new setting of Birnin T'Chaka is really impressive with its Wakanda-but-not-Wakanda feeling. I love the map and description on the last page of this issue, nicely summing up the setting and its place in the nation. As someone who's a big fan of maps (from years of reading Tolkien and teaching high-school history), I ALWAYS appreciate a good map.

And the stark colors of the whole issue are just incredible. I love how the colors and art of each scene ("Ize" at work and around the city, T'Challa talking with Shuri, the Deathlok lab, etc.) all feel different. It's a great touch. I'm looking forward to seeing what comes of this meeting between Black Panther and our mysterious new antagonist (possible protagonist in the making?).

On a less comic-related note, I was amused as my world shrunk recently. I just started my first PhD class in Education Policy & Psychology and found myself referencing a paper on alternative schools by our illustrious author, Eve L. Ewing. Then when I was talking with my Methodology professor, I found out he'd met Dr. Ewing at a conference in years past. I've been reading Ewing's Marvel writing since her awesome IRONHEART run back in 2018, and while I knew about her other hats as an author and academic, it was truly surreal to be reading and citing someone I knew better as a comic author as I embarked on this new PhD adventure.

Thanks again for an awesome and beautiful Black Panther story! I'm really enjoying this new run after John Ridley turned T'Challa's world upside down. :D

Andrew Salmon
Alexandria, Virginia

Hey, Andrew! Thanks so much for reading. I share your love for a good map! My friend and prior Black Panther writer Ta-Nehisi Coates and I are both also Tolkien fans, and he was the one who really wanted to put that map together. (There's also a brand-new book *Wakanda Atlas* by our mutual friend and walking Wakandan encyclopedia, Evan Narcisse.) Poring over that map and asking myself, "I wonder what goes on over here in this corner of the country?" is where this story begins!

Thanks for reading (and citing!) my academic work as well! Except now people reading this know about my other secret identity as mild-mannered professor Dr. Eve L. Ewing!

[throws smoke bomb and flees the scene]

Dear Eve and the great creative team of BP,

I'll be honest, I got into Black Panther pretty young. When I was first introduced to Marvel as a kid, my first exposure to him was in the two *Ultimate Avengers* animated movies and later, as a teen, in *Avengers: Earth's Mightiest Heroes*. I loved everything about him—his look, fighting style and, most importantly, his origin and the fact that he was a king to an entire African nation.

It wasn't until early this year, when I started reading the first half of Christopher Priest's acclaimed run, and I can't wait to finish the second half next year when the second-volume omnibus releases. That being said, yours is the second BLACK PANTHER run that I am reading, and I would like to say, I love it so much. From the first issue, I was hooked by the new status quo T'Challa has found himself in. I love his new costume and love your characterization of him, Eve, and how despite being exiled from his nation and throne, he continues moving forward and keeping an indomitable spirit. I'm glad I added this to my pull list, and with every new issue, I get excited to go to my local comic shop to pick it up, return home and read it.

I can't compliment the writing without complimenting the art too. I love Chris Allen on this book, love how he's drawing the dynamic fight scenes, Black Panther leaping and stalking the streets of Birnin T'Chaka. Probably my favorite thing about Chris' art is how he makes this book feel like a mixture of cyberpunk and neo-noir, akin to the *Blade Runner* movies, and I look forward to seeing more of it as this run progresses.

Lastly, I would like to thank this book for making me fall in love with Black Panther as a character again, seeing how great Marvel can truly be with their comic books and ultimately keeping my dream of one day becoming a comic-book writer myself alive.

Sincerely,
Jay Onaka
Greater Manchester, United Kingdom

Hey there, Jay! Thanks for writing us! Cyberpunk and neo-noir...you get it! On behalf of the team, I'm honored to play a role in your ongoing love of the character. Being new-ish or later in arriving to something is always kind of great because it means there's so much more to read and get into. Please do keep your dream of writing comics alive. I hope to read your stories someday! I promise they don't pay me a cut, but *Make Comics Like the Pros* (Pak and Van Lente) and the classic *Understanding Comics* (McCloud) are good places to start. Cheers!

BLACK PANTHER #4 was another strong issue. The art wasn't quite at the level of the previous issues but was still solid. The writing was great, especially the dialogue, which was cracking. This, and your competitor's *Birds of Prey*, really stuck out to me this week with their dialogue; I've really come to see Eve L. Ewing's and Kelly Thompson's works as places to go to for really lively, emotionally smart dialogue, which adds to our understanding of the characters with every line. T'Challa's "I'm afraid I am in very little position to assist you at the moment. At least now you are free to find your own way." was such an honest way of trying to add just a little bit of justice to Deathlok's unfortunate situation. T'Challa wasn't responsible for it, but he took some moral responsibility in the sense of recognizing that any person in a position to help should. In this case, all he could do was help the other person see the value of finding his own way as an objective good, but that was something. It reminded me of some of Vita Ayala's equally thoughtful dialogue about the responsibilities we owe each other in NEW MUTANTS.

Chris

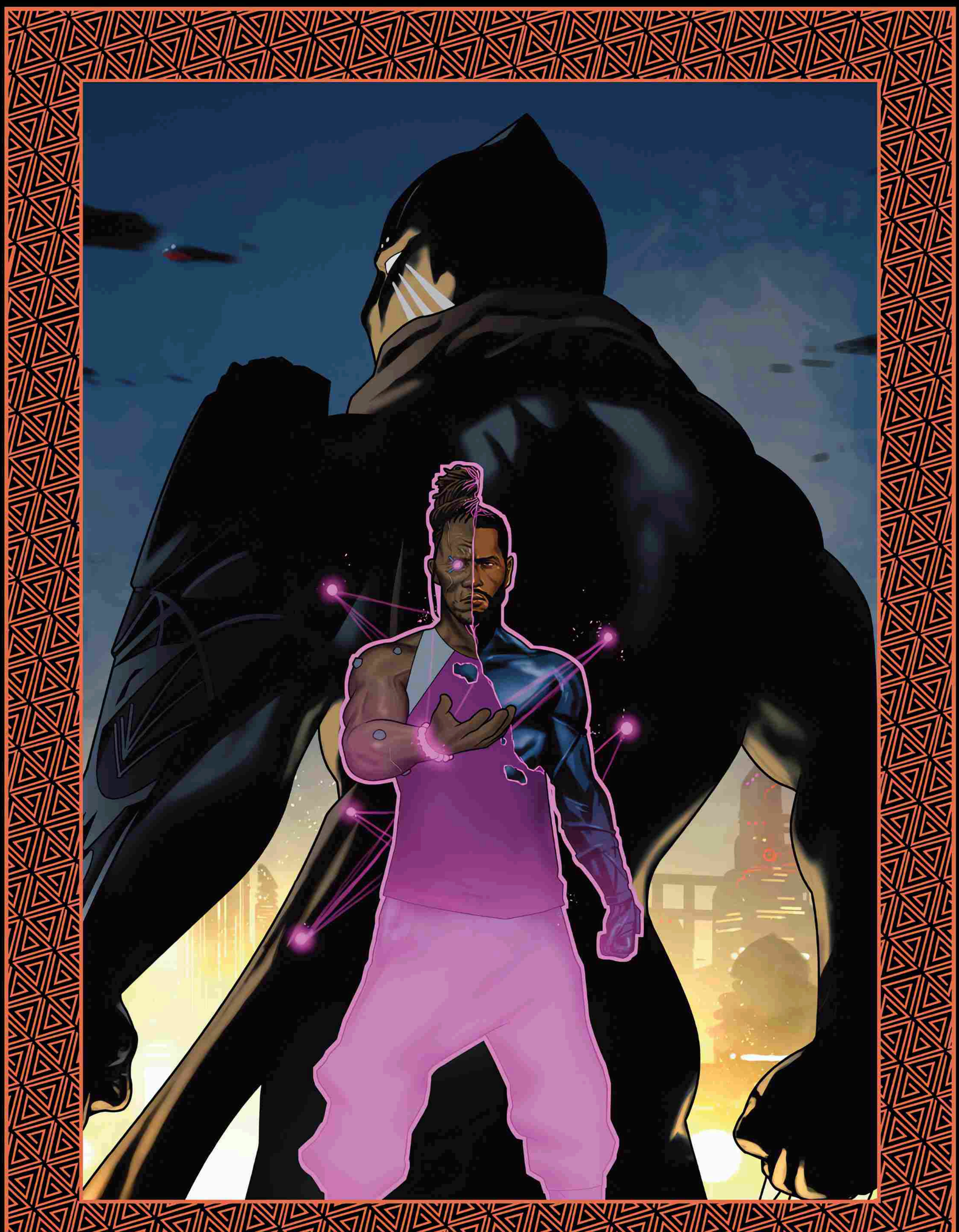
Thanks, Chris! Dialogue is the heart and soul of my job, and I'm in awfully good company with your comparisons here. It's been fun getting into T'Challa's voice. Quick-witted but regal and authoritative but humble and curious but confident... he can be a study in contrasts, and I'm always going for the right balance. We can respectfully disagree on the art, but if you didn't dig it, there's always more coming your way next month!

I love your letters, my fellow Wakandan travelers! And if you've got some fan art, I wouldn't be mad at it... I'm not saying, I'm just saying.

More soon,
Eve

And for a chance to see your letter answered by Eve in a future issue, send them over to MHEROES@MARVEL.COM and mark your letters "OKAY TO PRINT"!

NEXT ISSUE:



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